



**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY
ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

Student: **Michael Higley-Vance**

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED IN

Follow these procedures: If requested by your instructor, please include an assignment cover sheet. This will become the first page of your assignment. In addition, your assignment header should include your last name, first initial, course code, dash, and assignment number. This should be left justified, with the page number right justified. For example:

DoeJXXX0000-1

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Save a copy of your assignments: You may need to re-submit an assignment at your instructor's request. Make sure you save your files in accessible location.

Academic integrity: All work submitted in each course must be your own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by your instructor. Knowingly submitting another person's work as your own, without properly citing the source of the work, is considered plagiarism. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course. It may also result in academic dismissal from the University.

EL7003-8

Dr. Linda Collins

Instructional Design and Engaging E-Learning Activities

Activity # 2: Planning and Defining Learning Objectives

Comments:

Faculty Use Only

Hi, Michael, You have clearly described the objectives of this learning activity and why you have selected this as it aligns with instructional strategies for literacy in math, reading, and science which are overall important achievements for all students. I like your inclusion of the readiness test that will help to show preparedness and what types of help the student may need as he or she gets ready to take the class.

Your tasks include a variety of approaches to help students learn in the online environment. Excellent work! Happy New Year! Dr. Collins

Dr. Linda D. Collins 6.9 3 December 30, 2013

Literacy in the Content: Planning and Defining

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Literacy in the Content: Planning and Defining

Selecting a course content area for the implementation of an effective e-Learning experience is dependent upon many factors such as selecting an appropriate course content, designing an engaging online course, and student retention. The purpose of this paper is to (a) discuss the rationale for selecting Literacy in the Content as the developing online course, (b) describe the potential e-learners and technology expertise this course will require, (c) outline the learning objectives and course goals, and (d) ensure the instructional design process is followed using SAM (Successive Approximation Model).

Course Rationale

According to Tennessee's Department of Education Commissioner, Kevin Huffman, Tennessee students' scores have increased across many school districts in the state over the last few years. Almost every subject has shown major gains, particularly since the implementation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), in the content areas except for reading. In a recent 2013 report by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), Tennessee students are the number one fastest improving in the nation. Following the implementation of Race to the Top, Tennessee has seen three consecutive years of overall growth on the TCAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Practice). However, with the state's implementation of Race to the Top came a commitment to the implementation of Common Core Standards and an adoption of a new standardized assessment tool called PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). These initiatives are slotted for full implementation

beginning August 2014 and with it a sense of urgency among school officials across the state to stay focused on the skills learners need to continue achieving and growing.

In an action research article, written by Emily Calhoun in 2002, which focused on teaching literacy, more than half of the students' standardized test scores improved by two grade levels after the first semester literacy course and by the end of the second semester most students showed overall gains in all subjects simply because of the added literacy focus in reading. Furthermore, countries whose school districts focus on literacy in the content have shown to maintain or have an increased student achievement in content areas with a particular focus on specific reading skills such as comprehension, identifying main idea, and articulating simple text comparisons (Aydin, Erdağ, & Taş, 2011). Educational institutions and scholars around the world have consistently reported that a focus on literacy in the content areas exponentially helps to increase student achievement across all disciplines.

Course Overview

In this course four literacy strategies will be introduced in reading, math, and science. Learners will be required to use the literacy strategies, which will be the focus student learning objectives within the content areas, to complete the content performance tasks. Each lesson will begin with a lesson introduction, followed by a pre-assessment, the learning task or tasks utilizing one or more literacy strategies, and finally a post-assessment. Student tasks will include images, video, and audio components, which will help reinforce student objectives and performance goals. Information and technology communication (ICT) resources such as discussion boards, email, Skype, Voice Thread, and other relevant educational related online applications will be used as teaching and learning tools to enhance and encourage student engagement. Course content will be provided on, or just below, grade level in order to decrease

the variable that the learning content might be a distracting factor. Assessments created will evaluate students' application and use of the literacy learning objectives before, during, and after each lesson task. These assessments will use an exemplar rubric, created prior to a students' enrollment in the course to measure prior knowledge and student mastery of literacy goals and not the specific content being used to teach the literacy skills. Additionally, a short learner survey will be provided after each lesson task to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson's components and ICT applications.

Learning Management System

The learning management system (LMS) that will be used in the design and implementation of the online learning literacy course will be Blackboard. Blackboard, a technology leader in education has released several innovative online teaching and learning enhancements that will help improve and revolutionize the online learning experience (Augustine, 2013). Blackboard not only provides a learning management system structured for the e-Learning instructor but it also provides a unique learning experience for potential e-learners not found in other learning systems.

The e-Learner

The literacy course being developed for this assignment is designed primarily for middle school learners in sixth through eighth grade. Prior to enrollment, potential e-learners will be required to complete a student online readiness survey adapted from the Louisiana Board of Regent's Student Online Readiness Tool. The student readiness survey will evaluate a student's technology experience, study habits, personal and academic goals, and learning preferences. In order for students to be effective online learners e-learners must be self-motivated, able to effectively manage time, work independently but not in isolation, be comfortable working with a

computer, and poses the skills required to quickly learn and use various Web2.0 applications to complete lesson tasks (Muilenburg & Berge, 2005).

Technology Know How

Although learners will greatly benefit from having prior learning experience within an online learning environment no such expectation is made in regards to a student's technical expertise in this course. However, learners must have worked on a computer before, be able to open a program, work with a web browser, and be willing to use various Web2.0 resources to complete lesson tasks. If a learner poses the aforementioned know-how then the minimum technology requirements have been met to participate in the literacy course.

Course Goals and Objectives

The goal of the literacy course is to increase student achievement by practicing literacy skills throughout the content. At the conclusion of the literacy course students will be required to demonstrate the following learning objectives in the content areas of reading, math, and science:

- Utilize CLOSE-reading strategies when reading text to identify important information.
- Use comprehension strategies such as: making connections, visualizing, asking questions, inferring, determining importance, and synthesizing to increase text comprehension.
- Work to become an "expert" on a portion of a particular topic, share out with other "experts" while learning other portions of the overall topic, and finally jigsawing the pieces together in an effort to teach others the overall topic.

- Reflect on the learning experience using a quick write to evaluate what learners liked about the lesson and how well they understood the concepts.

Length of Course

The literacy course is designed to run for two weeks with three lessons covering one or more of the four course objectives. Learners will be able to complete the course lessons on their own time within the 14-day period. During this time, learners will be able to navigate the course environment and participate in engaging opportunities with other e-learners, ask questions, and complete learning tasks.

Lesson Implementation

In this section the literacy objectives and technologies implemented throughout the developed course will be outlined here. The content areas of reading, math, and science are used in each of the particular lessons to help facilitate the learning process. The following course outline and structure will be used throughout each of the lessons: (a) lesson overview, (b) pre-assessment, (c) lesson task, (d) post-assessment, (e) course review, and (f) lesson survey. These general lesson components will be covered in more and specific detail in the following paragraphs.

Lesson tasks. In each of the lessons a literacy strategy will be used to complete the lesson content tasks. The first two lessons, reading and math, will utilize a CLOSE-reading strategy, a text-based comprehension strategy, and a quick write. The third lesson presented in the course will be a science task. The science task will reinforce the CLOSE reading strategy and text-based comprehension skills learned in the previous two lessons. The science task's

main literacy objective will require learners to use a jigsaw strategy to complete the task also followed by a quick write.

Pre and Post Assessments. Pre and post assessments play a critical role in an instructor's ability to differentiate instruction. Pre-assessments should be given before a particular course or lesson is begun in order to gain an understanding of what learners know, understand, and are able to do. Without a pre-assessment, instructors do not know the readiness of learners for new learning, their specific learning differences and needs, or where to begin devising individual learning goals (Heacox, 2009). Conversely, post-assessments play a similar role in determining student achievement. Data from these assessments are most often used to determine mastery of student learning objectives or evaluating the need for re-teaching.

Lesson surveys. Surveys are very useful in the process of improving course content and design (Zint, 2012). They are often used to reflect on the learning process, improve existing content tasks or objectives, and re-design entire online learning environments. Lesson surveys help make course lessons better and more effective by giving instructors the opportunity to adjust components of a course or lesson based on the feedback its learners provide. In addition, a self-efficacy survey can also be used to adjust instruction and learning. A self-efficacy survey reports a learner's belief or confidence in his or her own performance on a specific academic task. While self-efficacy indicates how strongly students believe they have the skills to do well, a growing body of research also reveals that there is a significant relationship between students' self-efficacy beliefs and their actual academic performance (Siegle, 2000). A self-efficacy survey will be presented to learners before each of the lesson tasks and at the conclusion of the literacy course a course survey will be provided giving learners the opportunity to reflect and provide feedback.

Conclusion

Improving literacy in reading, math, and science was selected for course development due to the lack of academic growth in reading shown by Tennessee students' TCAP scores over the past three years. Increasing reading scores is quickly becoming a priority for Tennessee schools attempting to prepare students to be college and career ready post high school graduation, meet Race to the Top requirements, and stay ahead of Common Core teaching and learning performance expectations. Creating an online literacy course that reinforces the literacy strategies and skills needed to improve reading scores helps meet these state goals and initiatives.

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